

LAWSON WATER TOWER
First Parish Road
Scituate
Plymouth County
Massachusetts

HABS NO. MA-1218

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MASS,
12-SCIT,
1-

PHOTOGRAPHS AND
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20013-7127

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ARCHITECTURAL DATA FORM

STATE Massachusetts	COUNTY Plymouth	TOWN OR VICINITY Scituate
HISTORIC NAME OF STRUCTURE (INCLUDE SOURCE FOR NAME) LAWSON WATER TOWER		HABS NO. MA-1218
SECONDARY OR COMMON NAMES OF STRUCTURE		
COMPLETE ADDRESS (DESCRIBE LOCATION FOR RURAL SITES) First Parish Road		
DATE OF CONSTRUCTION (INCLUDE SOURCE) Tower- 1900, exterior structure- 1902	ARCHITECT(S) (INCLUDE SOURCE) unknown	
SIGNIFICANCE (ARCHITECTURAL AND HISTORICAL, INCLUDE ORIGINAL USE OF STRUCTURE) A unique architectural landmark, the Lawson Water Tower stands as a memorial to Thomas Lawson, the "Copper King" who is responsible for its construction. To avoid the view of an unadorned water tower from his estate just north, Lawson hired an architect to travel		
STYLE (IF APPROPRIATE) Taken from 15th century "Roman" high eclectic Revival style		
MATERIAL OF CONSTRUCTION (INCLUDE STRUCTURAL SYSTEMS) wrought iron standpipe covered with a wooden superstructure clad with wood shingles		
SHAPE AND DIMENSIONS OF STRUCTURE (SKETCHED FLOOR PLANS ON SEPARATE PAGES ARE ACCEPTABLE) standpipe- 75' high & 25' across, superstructure- 153', conical shaped		
EXTERIOR FEATURES OF NOTE turret attached to the side of the tower extending to cornice enclosing staircase; tower slightly curved at base, rising to a massive bracketed band with lights all around above is the bell/clock room in the dormered, flared conical roof; dormers have pagoda-like roofs; shingled enclosed portico entry in 2 flared tiers.		
INTERIOR FEATURES OF NOTE (DESCRIBE FLOOR PLANS, IF NOT SKETCHED) Spiral staircase (123 steps) with circumferential landings at 15' intervals; 11 ports 6' sq. look out over the landscape; bell room with 10 bells cast to order by Mensely Co. of West Troy, N.Y. connected by steel cables to a keyboard in music room at ground level.		
MAJOR ALTERATIONS AND ADDITIONS WITH DATES recently resingled Above the bell room is the clock room containing a huge clock which strikes the hour & plays the Angelus on the chimes at 7:00am & 6:00pm.		
PRESENT CONDITION AND USE Fair condition; still in use as a water tower		
OTHER INFORMATION AS APPROPRIATE *through Europe developing designs for the tower. Lawson chose this one based on a 15th century Roman structure. He supposedly paid \$60,000 in 1902 to have the water tank enclosed as such.		
SOURCES OF INFORMATION (INCLUDING LISTING ON NATIONAL REGISTER, STATE REGISTERS, ETC.) National Register nomination; prepared by Christine Boulding, Massachusetts Historical Commission, February 11, 1976		
COMPILER, AFFILIATION C. Lavoie, Historian, HABS/HAER		DATE February 16, 1989

ADDENDUM TO:
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